

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8196
INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ABIDJAN 3329

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY), PDIP, XY, IV, GV
SUBJECT: IVORIAN VIEWS ON PRESIDENT CARTER'S AFRICAN
TRIP AND RELATED SUBJECTS

REF: ABIDJAN 2359 (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN MEETING THIS MORNING, FOREIGN MINISTER
AKE EXPRESSED PLEASURE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S TRIP TO
AFRICA HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDED BUT REGRET THAT
PRESIDENT HAD BEEN UNABLE TO VISIT ANY FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN
STATE. AKE SAID THAT HOUPHOUET WAS CONSIDERING TRIP TO
THE UNITED STATES SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE. ON RHODESIA,
AKE NOTED HARDENING OF U.S. POSITION AGAINST INTERNAL
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SETTLEMENT AND HOPED WE DID NOT REPEAT NOT INTEND TO
ALIGN OURSELVES COMPLETELY WITH PATRIOTIC FRONT. HE
EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH OUTCOME OF MONROVIA SUMMIT
AND SAID THAT IVORY COAST WAS CONSULTING WITH SENEGAL
TO SEE WHAT CONCRETE STEPS COULD BE TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT
DESIRE FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH GUINEA. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCOMPANIED BY SENIOR INSPECTOR ARNOLD, I CALLED THIS MORNING ON FOREIGN MINISTER AKE TO ASCERTAIN IVORIAN VIEWS ON SUBJECTS OF CURRENT INTEREST FOLLOWING PRESIDENT CARTER'S JUST CONCLUDED VISIT TO AFRICA.

2. AKE SAID THAT THE IVORIAN GOVERNMENT WAS PLEASED THAT PRESIDENT'S VISITS TO NIGERIA AND LIBERIA HAVE APPARENTLY GONE WELL. HE HAD BEEN WITH PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY WHEN PRESIDENT CARTER'S TWO MESSAGES HAD BEEN DELIVERED BY THE EMBASSY TO THE IVORIAN LEADER -- THE FIRST CONGRATULATING HOUPHOUET ON HIS ROLE AT THE MONROVIA SUMMIT WITH SEKOU TOURE AND THE SECOND AFFIRMING U.S. FRIENDSHIP FOR THE IVORY COAST AND PRESIDENT CARTER'S PERSONAL RESPECT FOR HOUPHOUET. THE MESSAGES HAD BEEN EXTREMELY WELL RECEIVED, AND HOUPHOUET HAD HIMSELF INSTRUCTED THAT THEY BE RELEASED IMMEDIATELY TO THE IVORIAN PRESS, RADIO AND TELEVISION SERVICES.

3. AKE WENT ON TO SAY, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, THAT IVORIANS REALIZED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S TIME WAS LIMITED AND THAT HIS TRIP, THOUGH CONFINED TO LAGOS AND MONROVIA, WAS DESIGNED TO DRAMATIZE REAWAKENED AMERICAN INTEREST IN AFRICA AS A WHOLE. OF COURSE, SAID AKE, IVORIANS WOULD HAVE BEEN DELIGHTED TO WELCOME PRESIDENT CARTER IN ABIDJAN. IT WAS UNFORTUNATE, IF UNDERSTANDABLE, THAT NO FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN COUNTRY HAD BEEN INCLUDED IN PRESIDENT CARTER'S ITINERARY. VIEWS OF FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN LEADERS WERE CONFIDENTIAL

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INFLUENTIAL WITHIN AFRICA, AND IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT AMERICAN POLICY TAKE THEM INTO ACCOUNT. IVORIANS HOPED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD MAKE ANOTHER VISIT TO AFRICA WHICH WOULD ENABLE HIM TO VISIT FRANCOPHONE STATES, STARTING WITH THE IVORY COAST.

4. I OBSERVED THAT, AS PRESIDENT CARTER'S MESSAGES TO HOUPHOUET HAD INDICATED, WE TOOK VERY SERIOUSLY VIEWS AND ATTITUDES OF THE IVORIAN PRESIDENT. IN THE PAST YEAR THERE HAD BEEN SEVERAL DETAILED EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE TWO PRESIDENTS ON A VARIETY OF PROBLEMS, FROM THE MIDDLE EAST TO SOUTHERN AFRICA. AKE SAID THAT HOUPHOUET APPRECIATED THESE EXCHANGES AND WISHED TO CONTINUE THEM. IN FACT, HE ADDED, HOUPHOUET HAD REMARKED TO HIM THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN "INAPPROPRIATE" FOR PRESIDENT CARTER TO HAVE VISITED THE IVORY COAST BEFORE HOUPHOUET HAD BEEN ABLE TO CALL ON THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT. HOUPHOUET WAS CONSIDERING A TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES AT SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE, ALTHOUGH AT THIS POINT IT WAS NOTHING MORE THAN AN IDEA. I REQUESTED AKE TO KEEP ME CLOSELY INFORMED ON THIS SUBJECT SINCE, IF HOUPHOUET PLANNED TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES, WE WOULD WISH TO ASSURE

HIM AN APPROPRIATE WELCOME. AKE REPEATED THAT HOUPHOUET
HAD NOTHING DEFINITE IN MIND AND THAT HE WOULD ADVISE US
PROMPTLY SHOULD HOUPHOUET PROPOSE SOMETHING SPECIFIC.

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5. TURNING TO THE RHODESIA PROBLEM, AKE SAID THAT HE
HAD NOTED WITH INTEREST THAT IN LAGOS PRESIDENT CARTER
HAD BEEN EXPLICIT IN REJECTING THE TERMS FOR AN INTERNAL
SETTLEMENT AS UNACCEPTABLE. THIS APPEARED TO ALIGN THE
AMERICAN POSITION WITH THAT OF THE FRONT-LINE STATES.
THE IVORIAN GOVERNMENT, AS WE KNEW, PREFERRED A MORE
FLEXIBLE APPROACH. OUR EARLIER CHARACTERIZATION OF
PROPOSALS FOR AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AS INADEQUATE BUT
"A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION" WAS CLOSER TO THE IVORIAN
POSITION. THE IVORIAN GOVERNMENT HAD NO REPEAT NO ILLU-
SIONS ABOUT THE REALIABILITY OF IAN SMITH. HOUPHOUET
SHARED WITH US A BELIEF THAT THE SALISBURY PROPOSALS FELL
SHORT OF WHAT WAS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE A DURABLE SETTLEMENT.
NEVERTHELESS, HOUPHOUET CONTINUED TO BE CONVINCED THAT IT
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WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO GIVE UNQUALIFIED BACKING EITHER TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT OR TO THE MODERATE NATIONALISTS. THE ZAMBIAN FOREIGN MINISTER WAS EXPEDITED IN ABIDJAN TODAY. THE IVORIANS WERE NOT REPEAT NOT SURE ABOUT THE PRUPPOSE OF HIS MISSION, BUT IF HE HAD COME TO SOLICIT CATEGORICAL STATEMENT OF IVORIAN SUPPORT FOR THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, HE WOULD NOT RECEIVE IT. BY THE SAME TOKEN, THE IVORIAN GOVERNMENT DID NOT REPEAT NOT INTEND TO COME OUT IN FAVOR OF THE POSITION OF MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. THE IMPORTANT THING AT THIS STAGE WAS TO ENCOURAGE AN ALL-INCLUSIVE SETTLEMENT, NOT REPEAT NOT A SETTLEMENT WHICH EXCLUDED ANY OF THE PARTIES.

6. I STATED THAT WE SERE WORKING ALONG THESE LINES THE

ROPOSAL TO ASSEMBLE ALL PARTIES TO THE RHODESIA PROBLEM TO WORK OUT THEIR DIFFERENCES TOGETHER REFLECTED THIS. WE BELIEVED THAT THE TERMS FOR AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AS ANNOUNCED IN SALISBURY FELL FAR SHORT OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS. THIS DID NOT REPEAT NOT MEAN, HOWEVER, THAT WE BELIEVED A DURABLE SETTLEMENT COULD BE REACHED WITHOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE MODERATE NATIONALISTIS.

7. ON THE SUBJECT OF RELATIONS WITH GUINEA, AKE SAID THAT THE IVORIANS WERE SATISFIED WITH THE RESULTS OF THE MONROVIA SUMMIT AND WISHED TO MOVE AHEAD AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE TO IMPLEMENT DETENTE WITH GUINEA IN CONCRETE WAYS. AT HOUPHOUET'S INSTRUCTION, AKE HAD IN THE PAST FEW DAYS MADE A SHORT TRIP TO DAKAR TO DISCUSS WITH THE SENEGALESE FOREIGN MINISTER NEXT STEPS, INCLUDING EXCHANGES OF AMBASSADORS AND ACTIONS IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD. THE SENEGALESE HAD BEEN SOMEWHAT MORE SKEPTICAL OF SEKOU TOURE'S INTENTIONS THAN THE IVORIANS, BUT AKE THOUGHT THAT THEY TOO HAD BEEN ENTIRELY SATISFIED
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WITH THE RESULTS OF THE MONROVIA SUMMIT MEETING.

8. COMMENT: HOUPHOUET AND AKE HAVE ON SO MANY OCCASIONS RECENTLY ASSURED US THAT THE IVORIAN GOVERNMENT UNDERSTOOD WHY PRESIDENT CARTER HAD BEEN UNABLE TO VISIT FRANCOPHONE AFRICA THAT WE SUSPECT THEY ARE MORE SENSITIVE ON THIS POINT THAN THEY CARE TO REVEAL. THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGES TO HOUPHOUET WERE HELPFUL, BUT WE WILL HAVE TO REMAIN ALERT FOR OTHER WAYS TO REASSURE THE IVORIANS -- AND PRESUMABLY OTHER FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN LEADERS -- THAT WE TAKE THEM SERIOUSLY. IT WOULD, FOR EXAMPLE, BE USEFUL TO

RECEIVE PROMPTLY A FAIRLY COMPLETE SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS
IN LAGOS AND MOROVIA WHICH I COULD SHARE WITH HOUPHOUET
AND/OR AKE ON A PRIVILEGED BASIS. THE IVORIANS WILL, OF
COURSE, RECEIVE SOME INFORMATION FROM THE NIGERIANS AND
LIBERIANS, BUT THEY WOULD CERTAINLY APPRECIATE AN ACCOUNT
DIRECT FROM US, PARTICULARLY ON DISCUSSIONS RELATING TO
THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE HORN, AREAS IN
WHICH HOUPHOUET HAS KEEN INTEREST AND HAS BEEN
DIPLOMATICALLY ACTIVE.
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